



TOOTIE WATSON

# NASCAR

*Inside track*

## Teachers examine real-life industry

*Teachers hit the track at PIT Instruction and Training in Mooresville to learn firsthand about pit crew teamwork.*

The fast-paced world of NASCAR has prospered economically in North Carolina over the years as the state has seen the headquarters of several racing teams take root in the Piedmont. The multibillion-dollar industry also holds promise for North Carolina students. It has opened up dozens of careers offering far more than the slim chance of ending up in the driver's seat.

Twenty-two teachers traveled to Randleman in January to participate in "NASCAR: Science on the Race Track," a seminar that introduced them to all aspects of motor sports—from engineering, automotive design and performance, technology and research, to marketing, art, finance, and tourism. For one of the participants, Joan Charles of Winston-Salem, the decision to attend the seminar was inspired by the interest of her students at Union Cross Elementary. "I wanted to know more about NASCAR because the kids in my classroom just love it," she said.

In Randleman, the teachers lodged at the Victory Junction Gang Camp, where several seminar activities were held. Victory Junction Gang Camp was established

by Kyle and Pattie Petty in memory of their son Adam, who was killed in a racing accident in 2000. The camp's mission is to provide chronically ill children with fun summertime camp experiences. At the camp, the teachers met racing legend Richard Petty, his wife Lynda, and their daughter-in-law Pattie.

Over the years, NASCAR has become one of the most popular sports in America. The North Carolina Motorsports Association estimates that NASCAR contributes more than \$5 billion a year to North Carolina's economy. Thousands of fans pack the interstates bumper-to-bumper on race days at Charlotte. Millions more watch the races on television. National sponsors, including many Fortune 500 companies, have expanded the sport's appeal.

At the Sam Bass Gallery in Concord, the teachers learned that car design encompasses far more than what's under the hood. Teachers viewed NASCAR-specific graphic design, another career field the industry can offer to interested and talented students.

Traveling to Mooresville, the teachers were

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Above: NASCAR legend Richard Petty and his wife Lynda talked with the teachers about the history of motor sports. Right: Karen Heinemann, a teacher at George L. Carrington Middle School in Durham, and Michael Jordan, who teaches at Brevard Middle School, team up to design a miniature car.



the motorsports industry, the energetic teachers were headed back to their schools “already writing their lesson plans.”

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introduced to the life of pit crew members at PIT Instruction and Training. During a stop at Penske Racing South, they observed a wind-tunnel test in progress. They witnessed how drag, friction, down-force, and other aerodynamic forces affect vehicle performance, and how different members of the race team, from engineers to car owners, compensate for the

variables.

Kenneth Wells of Manteo, chairman of the NCCAT Board of Trustees who participated in the seminar, observed that after a week of learning firsthand the “intricacies, precision, and engineering” that define

## Ocracoke campus will be eco-friendly

Work crews continue to make progress on the eastern NCCAT campus to be housed in the former United States Coast Guard station on Ocracoke Island. Framing and rough-ins are close to completion, and renovations to the exterior of the facility are well under way.

The campus will feature new ecologically sound methods for heating and cooling. A geothermal heat-pump system, including approximately sixty wells, will underlie the grounds around the buildings. The system will operate more economically and quietly than conventional systems, and use less energy in the process.

As part of the Ocracoke project, the shoreline along the Pamlico

Sound that borders the campus will be restored to marshland, both to protect against erosion and to serve as a natural site for coastal environmental studies during NCCAT seminars. The campus is slated for completion later this year.



CLAYTON GASKILL





## Teachers gain perspective on Cherokee culture

Chuck Hensey of Raleigh, a history teacher at South Johnston High School in Four Oaks, examines an arrowhead fashioned by Cherokee artisan Bob Reed (seated) during an NCCAT seminar, “And the Owl Called My Name: Through Cherokee Eyes” held in February. Reed demonstrated the art of flint knapping to create arrowheads as well as the making and use of blowguns in Cherokee tradition. The seminar was designed to promote inquiry into the historical origins of the Cherokee, their folklore and oral history, dance, and culture. The teachers also learned about the Cherokee language, Sequoyah’s alphabet, and the current movement to revitalize the language in Cherokee public schools.



BARBAR MACON

## Authors share writing tips

By Henry Wong

What can we learn from accomplished writers? How can we help our students enjoy reading and writing? These were some of the questions pondered by teachers attending the seminar, “Hidden Treasures: Discovering Books by the Sea,” held in December at the Trinity Center in Atlantic Beach.

Authors Joan Carris of Beaufort and Eleanora T. Tate of Knightdale explored with the participants some of the creative writing techniques useful in the classroom and shared excerpts from their books.

“Language shapes our lives, and writing clarifies what we believe,” said Carris, author of *Welcome to the Bed and Biscuit* and *Howling for Home*. She also spoke about her motivation to become a writer and the elements of good writing, including theme, character, setting, conflict, plot, and grammar. Some tips for all writers, she explained, are to be passionate about your subject, write with clarity, and tell a good story by posing a problem or conflict.

Tate, author of *The Secret of Gumbo Grove*, *Front Porch Stories at the One-Room School*, and *Retold African Myths*, suggested that teachers use creative drama and plays to facilitate writing and teamwork among students. She also suggested one way to interest students in reading is to have them read a book and write a play that includes the story’s characters, scenes, scenery, and script. A technique for group storytelling useful for teachers encourages students to begin a storyline, but to end phrases with “and then” or “but.” The next student adds another part of the story, until all students have had a chance to contribute to the story. Tate won acclaim from her book, *Just an Overnight Guest*, made into an award-winning film and shown on the PBS series *Wonderworks* and Nickelodeon.

During the week, teachers enjoyed creative bookmaking with Nina Bagley of Sylva, who facilitated their art projects and demonstrated artistic techniques using natural products from the seashore. Also, they learned about a variety of children’s books, covering popular topics ranging from cultural heritage to ghosts, pirates, and North Carolina subjects, from Jan Broadfoot, owner of Broadfoot’s of Wendell Publishing Company near Raleigh. —Dr. Wong ([wongh@nccat.org](mailto:wongh@nccat.org)) is an NCCAT center fellow.

## Cumberland County Schools endow Womble scholarship

A new scholarship endowed at NCCAT honors the retired superintendent of Fayetteville City Schools, Dr. C. Fletcher Womble Jr. The Cumberland County Schools' Board of Education supported the creation of the Honored Educator Scholarship in Womble's name. Local education leaders, Womble's friends and family, and NCCAT representatives celebrated his life and career during a reception to announce the new scholarship February 13 in Fayetteville.

Womble, who retired in 1989, began teaching in the 1950s in Forsyth County. In Fayetteville, he was a key figure in public education for more than thirty years. He served at virtually all levels—teacher, principal, assistant superintendent, associate superintendent—and was named superintendent of Fayetteville City Schools in 1980.

The Fletcher Womble Jr. Honored Educator Scholarship will be awarded to one Cumberland County teacher each year. It will cover all costs associated with the teacher's participation in an NCCAT seminar, plus provide \$250 for use in the classroom. The Honored Educator Scholarship program at NCCAT supplements the center's state budget, making it possible to serve more of the state's teachers.

## Alumni weekends: A time to reconnect and celebrate great teaching

Betsy Beals teaches at Northwoods Elementary School in Cary and has been an elementary physical education specialist for more than thirty years. She was Teacher of the Year at both Northwoods Elementary and Lincoln Heights Elementary schools before she came to NCCAT in 1986. At that time, Beals was contemplating a career change. After attending an NCCAT seminar and spending a week in the mountains of western North Carolina with teachers from across the state, she renewed her commitment to the teaching profession. "At NCCAT, I was surrounded by energetic people who were extremely positive about teaching and understood the importance of our profession," she said.

In the twenty years since her experience, Beals has written two books and received numerous honors— from national certification, to Wake County Elementary Physical Education Teacher of the Year, to North Carolina's Physical Education Teacher of the Year.

She maintains her energy and enthusiasm for teaching by staying connected to NCCAT and its network of alumni. Beals and 164 other teachers met at Pinehurst in January for an NCCAT alumni reunion called "New Year, New You: Renewing Our Commitment to Healthy Living." This seminar gave teachers an opportunity to learn new ways to take care of themselves, so they can take better care of their students. Breakout sessions included a health-risk appraisal, blood pressure and cholesterol checks, and counseling on weight control, stress management, flexibility, and fitness.

According to Beals, NCCAT alumni reunions are "an exciting and rejuvenating celebration of life and living." Each year, NCCAT hosts three alumni weekends. The schedule for 2008 will be announced this fall.

BOBBY WILLIFORD



*Dr. C. Fletcher Womble Jr. (left) and Dr. William C. Harrison, current superintendent of Cumberland County Schools, display the certificate commemorating the endowment of a scholarship honoring the former superintendent. With them is Richard A. Schwartz of Raleigh, president of the Development Foundation of NCCAT Inc.*



*Sherry Davis of Beaufort, Linda Shafer of Raleigh, and Betsy Beals of Cary at the Pinehurst alumni weekend.*

## Piedmont “Community of Support” encourages national board candidates

Teachers in the Greensboro, Winston-Salem, and High Point areas seeking national certification received encouragement and guidance from NCCAT staff and alumni during “Community of Support” sessions held over the past few months.

Through a collaboration between the Piedmont Triad Education Consortium and NCCAT, more than 100 teachers who were interested in or currently seeking certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards learned more about the process and preparation required during three overview sessions in Greensboro.

NCCAT Center Fellow Mary Kay Cooley developed the “Community of Support” programs in conjunction with Dr. Frances Jones, executive director of the Piedmont Triad Education Consortium, which comprises twelve public school districts and seventeen colleges and universities in central North Carolina.

“We appreciated the opportunity to collaborate with the colleges, universities, and schools in the PTEC to bring these programs to Greensboro,” said Cooley. “They offered an excellent forum for sharing what we have learned about the certification process and also to raise awareness about the variety of professional development opportunities that NCCAT provides.”

Several NCCAT alumni who already have achieved national certification gave the aspiring candidates their reflections on the process during the programs. They were: Jake Henry of Jones Elementary in Greensboro, Martha Brown of Cameron Park Elementary in Hillsborough, Vicki Simmons of Gateway Education Center in Greensboro, and Lynn Rozelman of Grimsley High in Greensboro.

*“The national certification process was some of the best staff development I’ve ever had. It helped me focus on my teaching in terms of what my students really need from me.”*

*– Jake Henry, Pleasant Garden*

## Wells will retire as school superintendent



Dr. Kenneth W. Wells, chairman of the NCCAT Board of Trustees, will retire as superintendent of Perquimans County Schools effective June 30. In his January 22 announcement of his retirement, Wells said that after a thirty-year career as an educator, he felt the time had come to begin a new chapter in life. Wells will continue in his position on the NCCAT board.

“I have mixed feelings about retiring, but I am comfortable with my decision. Working in Perquimans County has been the highlight of my career,” he said.

Wells has served public education at virtually all levels.

He began his career in Charlotte as a fifth-grade teacher, was assistant principal and principal at several schools, and eventually became executive director of secondary education for Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, a system he served for a total of eighteen years. In eastern North Carolina, he worked for five years as interim superintendent and assistant superintendent for Dare County Schools. He was named superintendent of Perquimans County Schools in 2001, where he worked to improve professional development opportunities for teachers and educational opportunities for students. His leadership guided the district to a number of district, state, and national awards. His fellow NCCAT trustees elected him to a two-year term as chairman in the fall of 2005.



## Study of fantasy connects teachers to students' interest

By Jonathan Wade

Once upon a time, as the winter deepened over the last leaves of fall, a group of intrepid adventurers gathered to undertake a quest to uncover the treasures of learning. From disciplines ranging from language arts to guidance, teachers from across the state came to Cullowhee last October seeking an answer to the questions “Why is fantasy literature so interesting to children?” and “How can I use this

interest to help my students to achieve their greatest potential?”

The seminar that brought all of these educators together was “Daydream Believers: Tapping the Passion for Imaginative Literature,” designed to examine young people’s interest in fantasy literature and apply that interest in the classroom.

Although a few of the teachers came to the seminar as aficionados of fantasy, most noted that, though fantasy may not have been their favorite genre, they recognized the appeal that it had on their students. The seminar was an avenue for exploring the passion that fantasy literature evokes in the minds of young readers.

In addition to discussion, the teachers were also able to experience the magic of fantasy literature firsthand. For example, in an exercise about the nature of symbols, signs, and crests in medieval Europe, the teachers made their own heraldic crests. They also watched swordplay, textile, and storytelling demonstrations by a local chapter of the Society for Creative Anachronism.

The seminar gave teachers the opportunity to learn about and discuss fantasy literature—from the 4,000-year-old history of the genre to its current popular types—but most importantly, the seminar provided insight into students’ interests and ways to put that interest to use in the classroom. —Dr. Wade ([wadej@nccat.org](mailto:wadej@nccat.org)) is an NCCAT center fellow.



LINDA KINNEAR

In an art session of the seminar on fantasy literature, participants construct heraldic crests, which often represent times, places, people, and stories. The teachers are (left to right) Michelle Carlson of Charlotte, Carrie Smith of Garner, Nikisha Leak of Rockingham, and Erin Plummer of Concord.

## “Old Fossil” swings again



The second A. Craig Phillips “Old Fossil” Golf Tournament, sponsored by the Development Foundation of NCCAT Inc., will be held at Longleaf Golf and Country Club in Southern Pines on Tuesday, June 19.

The first tournament, held in June 2006, raised more than \$8,000 to benefit NCCAT’s Honored Educator Scholarship Fund in Phillip’s honor. The scholarship will become endowed when the fund reaches \$25,000.

Phillips’ family gave him his nickname “Old Fossil” on his eightieth birthday. He also is known as “The Chief” for his twenty years of service as the state superintendent of Public Instruction. He also served as superintendent of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools.

If you think you’re up to the “Old Fossil” challenge, or would like more information about the tournament or the scholarship established in Phillips’ honor, contact Greg Bauguess in the Development Office at 828-293-5202 or send an email to [bauguessg@nccat.org](mailto:bauguessg@nccat.org).

## Holocaust gathering now in sixth year

Collaboration and the sharing of ideas and resources were major themes in March during the “Gathering of Holocaust Educators” held at NCCAT in Cullowhee. More than forty teachers, media specialists, and other educators from across the state came to the event, now in its sixth year.

Over four days, the group examined how the United States responded to the Holocaust and other genocides. Among the leading Holocaust educators guiding the sessions were Walter Ziffer of Weaverville, a Holocaust survivor; Karl Schleunes, professor of history at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro; Bridget Conley-Zilkic, project director of the Committee on Conscience at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., and Brett Riggs, research archaeologist at UNC-Chapel Hill. The “Gathering of Holocaust Educators” also included an art exhibit, “Seeing the Dark: Visions of Pain and Healing,” by retired teacher Ann Ehringhaus of Ocracoke Island.

During the gathering a group of interested teachers met to discuss creating and disseminating statewide a pattern for increasing student involvement in education about genocides. Leading the discussion were teachers Lee Holder of Kinston and Angela Eichorn of Burgaw, members of the North Carolina Council on the Holocaust.

The idea is to set up prototype programs this year and to use those programs as models for regional initiatives in the coming years. The programs would be a part of ongoing education in history, social studies, and language arts classes. “This effort is one of the many wonderful things that happen every year when serious and dedicated professional educators reunite as Holocaust educators,” said NCCAT faculty member Dr. Jonathan Wade, also a member of the N.C. Council on the Holocaust.

NCCAT has provided Holocaust education programs for many years. Teachers who attend learn effective and sensitive ways to approach the difficult subject of the Holocaust and genocides with their students. “The Holocaust is such a broad topic and there are so many avenues for teaching it that often we have questions,” said Holder. “Having the opportunity to come together is ideal, because Holocaust educators are always willing to share every resource they have or know about.”

The annual gathering of Holocaust educators is funded in part by the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany Inc. of New York. Many of the participants are alumni of NCCAT’s “Teaching the Holocaust” seminar, which includes study at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C.



*Educators discuss ways to teach a difficult subject with sensitivity and understanding.*

## Teacher Magazine highlights NCCAT

NCCAT’s unique model of residential professional development for public school teachers was featured in the January-February online version ([www.teachermagazine.com](http://www.teachermagazine.com)) of the national publication, *Teacher Magazine*.

The article, entitled “A Trip to Teaching Nirvana,” appeared as a sidebar to a major feature, “Forever Young,” about how the best educators stay fresh after decades of teaching. Both articles were written by Steve Drummond, education editor for National Public Radio in Washington, D.C. He interviewed executive director Dr. Mary McDuffie, and Diana Beasley, North Carolina’s current Teacher of the Year and an NCCAT alumna. NCCAT is often recognized as “one of the most comprehensive statewide approaches to professional development in the country,” Drummond wrote.



MARK HASKETT

## Snow Day

A winter storm crossing the mountains February 1 delivered several inches of snow to the NCCAT campus and created a winter wonderland that these teachers from the eastern part of the state just couldn't resist.

Allison James of Clayton, and Karen Wrench and Patricia Sutton of Clinton took advantage of a break between their seminar sessions to build a snow creature that graced the hillside for several days afterward. In an email sent to NCCAT after she returned home, art teacher James, shown here putting on the finishing touches, wrote of the scenic mountain snowfall: "Just when you think NCCAT couldn't get any better...it does."

The three teachers were in Cullowhee to participate in a seminar titled "Teaching Every Child: Inclusive Classrooms."

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